

galerie michèle chomette

24 rue Beaubourg 75003 Paris

PRESS RELEASE

INTRUSIONS

Guest curators : Pascal Amoyel & Nicolas Giraud

Contemporary Artists 1969 - 2010

LEWIS BALTZ - ROBERT BARRY - ÉRIC BAUDELAIRE - JEAN-MARC BUSTAMANTE - ARNAUD CLAASS - THOMAS DEMAND - WILLIAM EGGLESTON - GERALD GARBEZ - LUIGI GHIRRI - PAUL GRAHAM - GUILLAUME LEMARCHAL - DAVID MOZZICONACCI - BERNARD PLOSSU - ÉRIC RONDEPIERRE - ED. RUSCHA - JACQUELINE SALMON - STEPHEN SHORE - BERTRAND STOFLETH - HIROSHI SUGIMOTO - HOLGER TRÜLZSCH - LAWRENCE WEINER

From the History of Photography 1850 - 1975

BAUHAUS - FELIX BONFILS - V. DIJON - WALKER EVANS - PIERRE JAHAN - ANDRÉ KERTESZ - HANNES MEYER - PAUL ÉMILE MIOT - ALBERT RUDOMINE - FÉLIX THIOLLIER - WILLY ZIELKE

Exhibition : 21 January - 6 March, 2010

Opening : Wednesday, 20 January, 5pm - 9pm

Ushering in 2010 with a movement of renewal and a breath of fresh air, Michèle Chomette has decided to entrust her gallery, artists and collections to a pair of young curators, Pascal Amoyel and Nicolas Giraud, who will be enjoying a free hand for the duration of an exhibition. As a point of departure, rather than setting out a theme, each of them has selected a photograph (owned by the gallery) that is rich in potential expansions, explosions and prefigurations of other iconographic arrangements.

Tennessee Roadside (1935), by Walker Evans, and *Szent Endre, Hongrie* (1975), by André Kertesz, belong to corpuses that are often considered to represent contrasting facets of photographic history. As a critical tool for interpreting and updating the network of those signs that pattern the world – and, more precisely, American reality – photography, for Evans, was the culmination of a slow process of analysis and construction. His "documentary style" pictures can be seen as neutral recordings aimed at maximal clarity and optimal legibility. In these hieratic images, the subject is captured frontally, in its totality, by the mechanical functioning of the camera. Kertesz's images use the same automatic mechanism, but in the opposite way, with visual shocks that make the continuous flux of perception falter, or indeed collapse. They cast doubt on visions and conceptions of the world as a prey to the sloth of habit, while also probing the essence of photography. One experiences them as a miscellany of masses, forms, bodies and faces, looking for a sense that is still in suspension; a sort of *poietic* promise.

The confrontation of the two images subverts cosy categorisations. Each photograph seems to burst into the other, revealing its double nature and ruling out its reduction to a conventional posture. Between these two inverse polarities, a space comes into being that promotes a series of divergences and convergences, attractions and disintegrations.

This tension makes possible a speculative exhibition in which the images on display show their capacity for the interpenetration of form, or sense, or even status; and images by artists from outside the gallery provide disjunctions of origin between Evans and Kertesz. Lewis Baltz's *Industrial Park Near Irvine* (1977) radicalises Walker Evans' photographic rigour in new territory, while Ed Ruscha's *Real Estate Opportunities* (1970) precludes any strictly formal interpretation. Here the use of the photographic image gives an ironically informational twist to a cataloguing of reality. Paul Emile Miot's *Iceberg, Baie de Kirpont*,

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Terre-Neuve (1858) and Luigi Ghirri's *Rimini* (1978) both express the relationship between the human, the natural and the artificial. But a real interpretation of the latter, as of Arnaud Claass's *Marseille* (1987), requires of the viewer the same visual agility as Kertesz's photograph, given that the underlying complexity clearly invalidates any recourse to categorisation, and that there is also, for example with Ghirri, a critical impeachment of the leisure society.

Woven into contiguities, caught in reciprocal alterations of nature, these photographs bring to light, *on the one hand*, the substantial nature of reality, and, *on the other*, the resistance of photography, like the two sides of a coin. And this double nature of the photographic image can in fact be found at the core of some works. As a meditation on the passage of time, and on diversion, Hiroshi Sugimoto's image results from a skilful utilisation of the device, where the tension between the real and the photographic is resolved in the blind space that perforates the image, a node of invisibility that subsists at its very heart. Like Kertesz's photograph, the image is organised around a centre in which there is nothing to be seen, thus revealing the power of absence and emptiness as detonators, with the displacement of peripheral elements towards, and beyond, the edge. Of course photography records the presence of things. It freezes them. But once placed at a distance from reality, the image retains within itself the traces of this schism. While some photographs simply make the cleavage visible, whether deliberately or fortuitously, others, such as Eric Baudelaire's *Diptyque 21A/21B* (2007), result from a perspective that foregrounds this distancing.

Near the end of his life, Walker Evans tersely conceded that he had ceaselessly been stirring up confusion with a view to freely creating "something other" than what might have been prescribed by the strict "documentary style". Likewise, the photographs shown in *Intrusions* bear the stamp of otherness – an effect produced by a set of incursions. Born out of a lacuna, but also a deposition, they are comprised of a certain proximity to reality, as much as a distance from it; and in the same movement they question their essence and the world. As affronts to intelligence, they destabilise belief in an exclusive relationship of the image to reality or the medium, with the appearance of an interplay between a reality that acts as a target and an image that acts as a screen. A double interpretation and a transverse movement combine to complete the assemblage of this exhibition, deployed and activated as it is by Lawrence Weiner's programmatic Statement CAT#206 (1970), PERHAPS WHEN REPRODUCED.

Translated from the French by John Doherty

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

ERIK SAMAKH

Rustling images. Auditory mirages. 1983-2010

Solo Show : 11 March – 7 May, 2010

Opening in presence of the artist : Wednesday 10 March, 5 pm – 9 pm

JACQUELINE SALMON & ROBERT F. HAMMERSTIEL

Vegetable roots. 1998/2009

Solo Show : 20 May – 10 July, 2010

Opening in presence of the artists : Wednesday 19 May, 5 pm – 9 pm